

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 USIA-12 TRSE-00 MBFR-03

SAJ-01 DODE-00 H-03 NSC-10 SS-15 EB-11 ACDA-19 CU-04

IO-13 OIC-04 COME-00 INT-08 OMB-01 EA-11 SCI-06 CEQ-02

RSR-01 /195 W

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R 131230Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4550

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY NOCISIA

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MT, LY, TS, IS

SUBJ: FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT

REF: VALLETTA 1413

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOW-UP REPORTS ON FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE IN
JULY 13 PRO-AND ANTI-GOM PRESS PROVIDED FURTHER INFORMATION
AND COLOCATION ADDITIONAL TO REPORT CARRIED REFTEL.

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MINTOFF SAID QADDAFI ACCEPTS THAT ISRAEL SHOULD NOT BE
DESTROYED, CALLED ON ISRAEL TO BE REASONABLE AND WITHDRAW TO
1967 BORDERS, AND REPORTED SADAD HAD TOLD HIM OF CONCESSIONS
HE IS WILLING TO MAKE TO ISRAEL.

2. IN REPLY TO OPPOSITION CRITICISM OF HIS FAILURE INCLUDE ISRAEL IN HIS PROPOSAL THAT MEDITERRANEAN ARAB STATES PARTICIPATE IN CSCE, MINTOFF SAID THAT MALTA HAS REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH ITALY, LIBYA, AND TUNISIA, OF WHICH IT IS VERY PROUD, AND IT WAS IN THAT CONTEXT THAT IT WAS DECIDED THAT MALTA AND ITALY SHOULD REQUEST THAT ARAB STATES BE HEARD. THIS REQUEST WAS MADE BY THE ARABS. MALTA HAS NO REGIONAL ARRANGEMENT WITH ISRAEL. ISRAELIS DO NOT WANT THEIR AFFAIRS DEBATED AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND CONSIDER MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT AS A MATTER TO BE SETTLED BETWEEN THEM AND ARABS. HE OFTEN HAD RECEIVED MESSAGES FROM THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR IN MALTA, BUT THE AMBASSADOR HAD NEVER ASKED GOM TO USE ITS GOOD OFFICES TO INSURE THAT ISRAEL'S VOICE BE HEARD AT THE CONFERENCE. IF HE HAD ADDED ISRAEL'S NAME TO THAT OF TUNISIA AND ALGERIA ON HIS OWN, HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN CAUGHT ON THE WRONG FOOT SINCE ISRAEL MIGHT HAVE OBJECTED ON GROUNDS THAT IT HAD NEVER ASKED HIM TO DO SO. MALTA IS A FRIEND OF BOTH ARABS AND ISRAELIS AND DOES NOT WISH EITHER OF THEM TO BE DESTROYED. GOM IS CERTAIN U.S. AND USSR HAVE GIVEN UP HOPE OF SOLVING ISSUE, BUT MALTA AND OTHER MED. COUNTRIES MUST CONTINUE EFFORTS CONVINCED BOTH SIDES TO MAKE PEACE.

3. MINTOFF SAID QADDAFI HAD ACCEPTED THAT ISRAEL SHOULD NOT BE DESTROYED, BUT ISRAEL, TOO, SHOULD BE REASONABLE AND SHOULD NOT CONTINUE TO PROVOKE THE ARABS. ONE COULD NOT REASON IF ONE HAD PEOPLE LIKE DAYAN AND OTHER MADMEN. INTERRUPTING, OPPOSITION MP BORG OLIVIER DU PUGET SAID, "YOU SHOULD MENTION ABBA EBAN, WHO IS A DOVE." MINTOFF SAID HE HAD MENTIONED DAYAN BECAUSE HIS POLICIES ARE SUPREME. BECAUSE THEY WON A WAR, THEY THINK THEY ARE OMNIPOTENT AND MORE POWERFUL THAN ANYONE.

4. IN HIS LAST MEETING WITH SADAT HE WAS SURPRISED BY THE EXTENT OF THE CONCESSIONS HE IS PREPARED TO MAKE TO THE ISRAELIS. IT WAS NOT TRUE THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO RECOGNIZE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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ISRAEL AS A STATE. HE IS PREPARED TO GUARANTEE FREE PASSAGE THROUGH GULF OF AQABA, AND TO GUARANTEE THEIR FRONTIERS PROVIDED THEY WITHDRAW TO 1967 BORDER.

5. REFERRING TO THE QE 2 CRUISE TO ISRAEL, MINTOFF SAID THAT MALTA HAD PASSED THROUGH THE GREATEST DANGER WHEN BRITISH ARMED FORCES EXCORTEED THE SHIP CARRYING PROMINENT JEWS TO ISRAEL. THIS WAS A HIGHLY PROVOCATIVE ACT AIMED AT FURTHER HUMILIATING THE ARABS AND WAS MEANT TO SHOW HOW STRONG ISRAEL IS. UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE BRITISH THE SHIP HAD SAILED UNDER THE VERY NOSE OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES MOST DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT. HMG HAD TOLD GOM THAT EVERYONE

HAD A RIGHT TO CHARTER A SHIP. THIS REASONING WAS FAR FROM PLAUSIBLE. IT IS NOT CREDITABLE THAT FOR A SMALL PROFIT IN A COMMERCIAL VENTURE BRITIAN WOULD SPEND MILLIONS IN MILITARY PROTECTION. THE ARABS HAD TOLD GOM THAT BRITIAN WAS SUPPOSE TO BE USING MALTA TO PROTECT MALTA AGAINST THE SOVIET THREAT, BUT INSTEAD THEY WERE USING IT TO INSULT THE ARAB NATIONS. THE ONLY ANSWER GOM HAD TO THIS WAS THAT ACCORDING TO THE AGREEMENT MALTA COULD NEVER BE USED AS A BASE TO ATTACK THE ARABS. IF SOME OF THE ARABS HAD ON THAT OCCASION STRUCK A MATCH, AS SOME HAD SUGGESTED, BECAUSE THEY ARE THE UNDER-DOGS AND HAD NOTHING TO LOSE, ONE DREADED TO THINK WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES MIGHT HAVE BEEN. FORTUNATELY, WISER COUNSEL PREVAILED, BUT ONE COULD NOT SAY HOW LONG THIS WOULD CONTINUE.

6. GOM HAD "WISPERED IN ISRAELI EARS" THAT THEY WERE FRIENDS BUT THEY SHOULD NOT ALLOW POWER TO CORRUPT THEM. HE HAD TOLD THEM THAT IT WAS TRUE THAT THEY HAD GIVEN ARABS A BEATING, BUT IF THEY DID NOT WANT MALTA TO CONSIDER THEM LIKE HITLER, BECAUSE FORCE WAS ON THEIR SIDE, THEY SHOULD NOT INSIST ON HUMILIATING THE ARABS AND INSIST ON RECOGNITION BEFORE STARTING DISCUSSIONS. NO ARAB WORTH HIS SALT WOULD EVER HUMILIATE HIMSELF IN FRON OF ISRAEL BY RECOGNIZING IT BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS.

7. MINTOFF SAID NO ONE COULD FAIL TO SYMPATHIZE WITH THE PALESTINAINS WHO HAD BEEN WITHOUT A HOME FOR THE LAST 26 YEARS AND WHO HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO HUMILIATIONS AND DEFEAT. THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO THEIR FATHERLAND, BUT THEY HAVE FOUND NO HELPING HAND FROM ANY COUNTRY. IF HE (MINTOFF) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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WERE A PALESTINIAN, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN A GUERRILLA FIGHTER FOR HIS COUNTRY AND HE WOULD HAVE HIGHJACKED AIRCRAFT TO ATTRACT WORLD ATTENTION TO THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

8. IN ADDITION TO HIS STATEMENT (REPORTED REFTEL) ON INSISTING ON ARAB PARTICIPATION IN PHASE II. MINTOFF SAID MALTA WOULD NOT PROMOTE ISRAELI PARTICIPATION SINCE IT HAD NEVER BEEN ASKED TO DO SO. MALTA WOULD NOT OPPOSE PROPOSALS THAT ISRAEL ALSO PARTICIPATE, BUT IF SOME OTHER COUNTRY OBJECTED TO THIS, THERE WOULD LIKEWISE BE NO CONCENSUS.

9. MINTOFF TERMED THE ITALIAN PROPOSAL FOR A MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE INTERESTING, BUT SAID MUCH WORK WAS INVOLVED IN SETTING UP SUCH A CONFERENCE. MEANWHILE THE ITALIAN AND FRENCH GOVERNMENTS WERE FULLY BACKING MALTA'S STAND AT THE CONFERENCE.

10. TODAY'S GWU PAPERS FRONTPAGE HEADLINE JOINT COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING VISIT TO PARIS OF ALGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, STATING THAT FRANCE WOULD BACK MALTA'S REQUEST FOR ALGERIA AND

TUNISIA TO ADDRESS THE CONFERENCE.

11.COMMENT: MINTOFF'S EXPOSITION IS CLEAREST PUBLIC
EXPRESSION YET ON HIS SUPPORT FOR ARAB POSITION AND HIS BELIEF ISRAEL

MUST TAKE FIRST STEP BY WITHDRAWAL TO 1967 BORDERS. THE DEBATE
ITSELF ONCE MORE SHOWED THAT INABILITY OF NATIONALISTS EFFECTIVELY
TO OPPOSE MINTOFF AND MAKE SIGNIFICANT COUNTER ARGUMENTS.
WE TEND TO GO ALONG WITH GWU PAPER MALTA NEWS JULY 18 EDITORIAL
WHICH SAYS DEBATE SHOWED NATIONALISTS ARE DEVOID OF POSITIVE IDEAS.
"HOW CAN THEY ASK FOR A DEBATE AND LIMIT THEMSELVES TO A SERIES
OF RHETORICAL QUESTIONS AND MISERABLY FAIL TO PROJECT ONE'S
OWN THEORIES ON ISSUES UNDER REVIEW?"
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